

have reduced dollars for affordable urban and rural housing.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest we need to come together and sit down and stop playing with the unemployed, but help them.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN).

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as it has been said before, this is the same song in the third verse. I respect my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, but they are wrong in this third effort. In fact, there is a country western song called, "What Part of No Don't You Understand?" "No" to the AMT tax cuts, "no" to the other tax cuts that will not help the economy.

I am surprised that my Republican colleagues insist on making the thousands of unemployed Americans continue to suffer. We could pass the bill that passed the Senate last week, an additional 13 weeks, by unanimous consent today; but no, Members want to add to this Christmas tree because they want to send it to the Senate one more time so it can die like the last two. Members are using this like a political weapon instead of being concerned about the American people.

Like most of our Nation, I have constituents who are unemployed, in my own town of Houston, just the Enron employees who have lost their jobs because of mismanagement and corruption. My constituents need this extension now. The idea of just playing with it like we are doing here is outrageous to the people who need this help.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DUNN), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I have an overwhelming sense of *deja vu*. This is the third time the House has taken up a bill to help workers and boost the economic recovery. Some of my colleagues in the opposition prefer platitudes and promises instead of action. They would rather talk about helping the unemployed and promoting economic growth rather than putting together a workable plan. Their motto ought to be "Just say no."

Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, wishing for a stronger economy will not make it so. Congress needs to act. Our constituents might justifiably wonder why we are voting on this bill a third time. They ought to know that 2 months ago the House passed a generous, fair-minded bill that provided \$37 billion in unemployment coverage, health coverage for the unemployed, tax incentives for businesses, and tax relief for the middle-income families. But the other body objected. Why? We just recently heard it from the gentleman from California, because they said that tax relief would help the rich.

What does that mean? The rich like the schoolteacher who lives in my district who makes \$30,000 a year and cannot afford housing in her own district and drives an hour to get to work? She

is in the 27 percent bracket; they do not want to lower it. Is she one of the rich they are referring to?

The other body also objects to our health care provisions. Why? They did not agree with the way that we cover the unemployed. They would like to help the folks who work only for big business. They do not want to help the employees in small businesses who do not have access to health care coverage when they are laid off.

Mr. Speaker, these arguments are lost on the American public. In my part of the Nation, we have not yet felt the full impact of the 30,000 Boeing workers who expect to be laid off, and yet unemployment in Washington State is over 7 percent, number 2 in the Nation and climbing.

This bill would provide additional unemployment to the 13 weeks we already provide in this bill because my State of Washington qualifies under that 4 percent unemployment rate. We are at 7.1 percent. Further delay is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to act now. Let us get this bill passed and over to the Senate. Let us get the job done so we can get help to our folks at home.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance my time to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), and ask unanimous consent that he control the balance of the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 622 for the 187,000 that are losing their jobs, and the Enron employees in my district that are desperately in trouble because of the Enron collapse.

I rise in strong opposition to this "economic stimulus package" because it is a deviation from the bipartisan precedents set in recent months by Congress, and represents misguided priorities.

Today's consideration of a motion to concur in the Senate amendments with an amendment to H.R. 622—Hope for Children Act allows for a raid on the bipartisan 13 week extension of worker unemployment compensation passed by the Senate.

The Senate package, which passed by a unanimous vote, provides a 13-week extension of unemployment benefits for people whose regular benefits have been exhausted. This represents real and responsible stimulus for those who need it most. This is crucial because it is estimated that 2 million working Americans will exhaust their regular benefits in the first 6 months of this year. In fact, very few of them are now currently eligible for an extension of those benefits to ensure they have income to replace their lost wages while they are seeking either reemployment or new employment.

Instead, this bill substitutes that compromise with a highly partisan Republican bill that excludes the Minority from this process, raids the Social Security and Medicare trust fund, and sacrifices American workers in need.

Substantively, this bill precludes the Minority from offering a substitute, any amendments, or a motion to recommit, which effectively eviscerates the fragile bipartisan compromise reached in the Senate. But the American people must be told the trust about this travesty of process.

I, along with my Democratic colleagues in Congress, have stood shoulder-to-shoulder and toe-to-toe with the President in the war against terrorism. We have been steadfast in our bipartisan support. As a result we've strengthened our security and protected America from future attacks. But for the state of our union to truly be sound, we must stand together today for a real economic stimulus package that helps all Americans. Sadly, the bill before us puts partisanship and the special interests above the millions of workers affected by the recession. As a member of Congress from Houston which has been so severely hit by recent events, I take particular exception to this.

Today, I urge Congress to take up a real economic stimulus and worker relief package that will help the 5,000 ex-Enron employees in and around Houston who have lost their jobs and their hard-earned pensions. Today, I urge Congress to take up real economic stimulus and worker relief package that helps the 89,000 American manufacturing workers who lost their jobs last month; the 54,000 American construction workers who lost their jobs last month; the 100,000 airlines workers who have lost their jobs since September 11, 12,000 of which were from Continental Airlines alone; the 192,000 American service industry employees who lost their jobs in the fourth quarter; the 211,000 American transportation and public utilities workers who lost their jobs over the past seven months; and the 1.4 million Americans who lost their jobs since last March.

Mr. Speaker, America needs a temporary plan that stimulates the economy by focusing on unemployment and the 2,496,784 initial claimants reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in December 2001. In Texas alone, the number of unemployed was 539,947, or 5.1 percent in December 2001. Clearly, these numbers are far higher today. The bill before us fails to give the relief that is needed. The bill before us is not temporary. It does not target relief to businesses hurt by the recession; it enacts tax reductions for the wealthy and corporations, and does very little to help middle income workers whose extra spending would serve to stimulate the economy. In fact, the bill before us repeals the corporate minimum tax which ensures that corporations can not use tax shelters and loopholes to avoid taxes. Furthermore, it accelerates a cut in the 28 percent tax bracket even though 75 percent of American households would receive no benefit from this cut because they do not have enough income to be in this tax bracket.

Perhaps most disturbingly, all of the costs of the bill are paid out of Social Security and Medicare surpluses. Clearly, permanent and expensive tax cuts like those included in this package will increase the deficit and risk increasing long-term interest rates.

Mr. Speaker, America needs a stand-alone worker relief bill that helps the 1 million U.S.